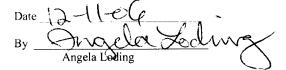
I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via the EFS to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on the date shown below.

PATENT Attorney Docket No.: S-12



## IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s): David C. Hovda et al.

Serial No.: 10/656,597

Filing Date: September 5, 2003

Title: METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR

TREATING INTERVERTEBRAL DISCS

Examiner: Rollins, Rosiland Stacie

Group Art Unit: 3739

Confirmation No.: 7953

Response to Final Office Action

MAIL STOP - AF

Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

In response to the Final Office Action mailed October 10, 2006, Applicants respectfully submit the following amendments set forth below and request favorable action thereon.

Amendments to the Specification begin on page 2 of this paper.

Amendments to the Claims are reflected in the listing of claims which begins on page 3 of this paper.

Remarks/Arguments begin on page 7 of this paper.